

## **LINKS: THE CHESTERFIELD AND NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE AND ACTION LIMITED**

### **JOB SHARING POLICY**

Job sharing is defined as two or more employees sharing a full time job. (A full time job is 30 hours per week or more). The responsibilities of the job are divided between the sharers and there is an integral commitment to cover the post as a whole. This distinguishes job sharing from two part-time posts where there is no inherent commitment to sharing the whole job. The job remains on the establishment as a full time post.

In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy and family friendly employment contract, Links will consider requests to job share from a current or prospective employee.

Sharing can be on a week-on-week-off arrangement, on a morning/afternoon basis, 2.5 days a week each (pro rata for 30 hours) or other patterns. It is even possible for three people to share one job.

The duties of the post can be shared equally i.e. each sharer does the whole job but only for part of the time. Alternatively, each sharer can specialise e.g. one may do long term work and one may do shorter term work. Whatever split is agreed, each sharer should be able to answer queries on the other sharer's work.

Each sharer should be capable of doing the whole range of duties of the post even though they may specialise on topics or tasks.

Job sharing has advantages for the employer and the employee. The employer retains experienced staff and is able to put its equal opportunities policies into practice. The employee is able to meet external commitments while maintaining continuity in the post. Two bodies and two minds are available for the same job and there is the added commitment to each other as sharers. A greater range of skills and experience is available to the organisation.

On the down side, it may make recruitment to half the job more difficult and there is an additional burden of cross-over and message taking/leaving. There is a small administrative burden of an additional member of staff.

It may not be possible to agree every job sharing request because of considerations of space, financial resources, project or funder restrictions. The duties of the post may be very difficult to split. A project may be nearing its end and it may be felt impossible to recruit the other half of the post.

However, trustees should be aware that failure to agree to a job sharing request may open them to challenge under discrimination or employment law and should therefore give proper consideration to each request on its merits. Two officers should give detailed consideration to the request and consult the most senior member of staff available. The officers decision should be reported to the Board for ratification. An existing employee can take out a grievance if they are not satisfied and the provisions of the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures would apply.

"In legal terms job sharers who divide the work between them are the same as part-time employees." (The Voluntary Sector Legal Handbook, Sandy Adirondack and James Sinclair Taylor 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.)

However, in order to make job-sharing a positive experience for employees and employer, the following procedures will be followed by Links:

An addendum will be made to the Job Description, specifying the way the job is to be split, working hours, cover arrangements and which duties the sharer will cover. As far as possible, this addendum will be agreed with the potential sharers.

One hour will be allowed for cross-over on a weekly basis (depending on the pattern of sharing).i.e. where both sharers meet to share information about the way the job is going.

A job share message book will be kept in which confidential information can be relayed between sharers to supplement the cross-over meeting.

For posts where flexible working is a requirement, sharers would work outside their normal hours in the same way that full time staff do.

Attendance at staff, team and Board meetings should normally alternate between the sharers depending on agenda items. Participation in staff away days should be available for both sharers. Attendance on training events should be at the discretion of the line manager.

Salary, holidays, bank holidays, sick leave provision and other contractual entitlements should be on a pro rata basis according to hours worked.

Where the request to job share comes from an external candidate or candidates, both shall be interviewed separately and the recruitment panel must be satisfied that each candidate can meet all the essential requirements of the person specification.

If a job sharer leaves, before external recruitment starts, the post shall be offered first to the remaining job sharer to take up on a full time basis.

**Approved by the Board on 21.5.02**

**Reviewed by Board on 13.7.10**